

TO: City Council Public Safety Committee

FROM: Chief William Hogan

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RE: GANGS

Gangs are a growing problem in North Carolina as well as the entire country. According to the 2005 Governor's Crime Commission Gang Survey, there are 8,517 gang members and 387 different gangs in North Carolina. Smaller cities and the rural areas of North Carolina are beginning to experience the same kind of gang crimes as the larger cities.

REGIONAL TRENDS (SOUTH)

- MS-13 is one of the newest threats to the region.
- Growth of gangs within the Hispanic community has brought an increase in violence and crime to the region.
- Graffiti and tagging are appearing in communities.
- Neighborhood or homegrown gangs are increasing throughout the region.
- Gangs in the South are most likely to be involved in the distribution and sale of marijuana and cocaine.

NORTH CAROLINA TRENDS

- NC has the fastest growing Hispanic population, and the Hispanic gang activity is increasing as well.
- Gangs are very mobile – migrate up to two hours to be involved in criminal activity.
- Gangs members are involved in mid-level drug distribution; business based violence such as assaults and homicides; property crimes, especially auto thefts; and prostitution.
- Gangs are a moderate threat statewide moving toward high threat.

The top five gangs in NC

1. Crips/Gangster Disciples
2. SUR-13
3. MS-13
4. Bloods
5. Vatos Locos

Top Five Hispanic gangs in NC

- SUR-13
- MS-13
- Vatos Locos
- 18th Street
- Mexican Mafia

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA TRENDS

Rural counties in Western North Carolina are seeing an increase in the Hispanic gangs particularly in Henderson County and other counties with a large agricultural economy. The SUR-13, MS-13, 18th Street, and Mexican Mafia all claim to have membership in Western North Carolina.

- The gangs tend to be developed locally.
- Leadership is loosely structured.
- Leadership is fragmented.
- Most gangs are independently operated.

A factor for Hispanic gangs to use rural areas is that law enforcement agencies in smaller municipalities and rural areas generally do not have the resources to deal with the increasing gang activity.

GANGS IN ASHEVILLE

The gang trends in Asheville tend to mirror the state trends.

- There are a number of individuals that claim membership or affiliation to various gangs.
- Individuals display gang tattoos, artwork, and display colors.
- Several young adults claiming membership have been interviewed.
- No serious gang related crimes have been documented.
- There have been simple assaults and vandalism that could be gang related.

Some of the gangs in the Asheville area include:

- Crips/Gangster Disciples
- Bloods
- Neighborhood Affiliations (Hillcrest, Mountainside Posse, Westside Posse, Shiloh)
- MS-13 (showing up in South Asheville)
- Skinheads/White Supremacist

CHALLENGES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENICIES STATEWIDE

- Education
- Data collection, exchange, and management (profiles, vehicles, ect)
- Community resources (schools, citizens, elected officials, law enforcement, youth programs)
- Denial and confusion